Weekly Pational Intelligencer.

WASHINGTON: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1864.

Weekly National Intelligencer.

CARDROON ROUGHLY WHILE SAMENIE

BY GALES & SEATON. JAMES C. WELLING, ASSOCIATE EDITOR. The subscription price of this paper for a year is Two

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MILITARY EMANCIPATION AT THE SOUTH. From recent indications it is easy to perceive that the drift of public opinion in the South is rapidly settling in a direction which points to the ultimate employment of negroes as a means of recruiting the strength of the insurgent armies. formed, the highest military authority in the South has given in his adhesion to the proposition, we

yield its assent to his recommendation. the probable results of such a determination on the tions of military advantage. part of the Southern leaders, should they carry it It will be remembered that the Richmond Eninto effect, and actually recruit the insurgent ar- quirer, in recently discussing the relations and mies from the negro population. Will it prove a aspects of this question, intimated the opinion that source of strength or of weakness to the Southern there was some connexion between the decision cause? On this subject opinions are divided, that should be made of it and the question of Euthough the preponderant sentiment seems to be in ropean recognition or intervention. It said : favor of the latter view, especially among those who support the policy of the Administration. As the destruction of slavery is held to be the paramount means for the suppression of the rebellion, if not the paramount end of the war, they reason that, so far as regards the beneficent result it can be of little consequence whether the system of slaber to each other in 1863; then no necessity exists for very is overthrown by the military force of the United States or undermined by the policy of the insurgents. In either event the slaves will be alternative of subjugation without slaves or independence emancipated, and after that the Union will take by arming the negroes. care of itself.

by each. For Mr. LINCOLN has avowed that he of the policy of military emancipation. abstained from military emancipation until an "indispensable military necessity" seemed to constrain this step; and the employment of slaves in the Southern armies is bised on precisely the same ground. To this effect Mr. Lincoln wrote in his letter to Col. Hodges, of Kentucky, under date of last April 4th, as follows :

"When, early in the war, Gen. Fremontattempted military emancipation, I forbade it, because I did not then think it an indispensable necessity. When, a little later, Gen. Cameron, then Secretary of War, suggested the arming of the blacks, I objected, because I did not yet think it an indispensable necessity When, still later, Gen. Hunter attempted military emancipation, I again forbade it, because I did not yet think the indispensable no bade it, because I do not yet that the indispensable ne-cessity had come. When, in March and May, and July, 1:62, I made carnest and successive appeals to the Border States to favor compensated emancipation, I believed the ndispensable necessity for military emancipation, and arming the blacks, would come, unless averted by that measure. They declined the proposition; and I was, in my ent, driven to the alternative of either surre dering the Union, and with it the Constitution, or of laying strong hand upon the colored element. I chose th In choosing it I hoped for greater gain than loss; but of this I was not entirely confident. More than a year of trial now shows no loss by it in our foreign relations; none in our home popular sentiment; none in our white military force-no loss by it any how or any where. On the contrary, it shows a gain of quite a hundred and thirty thousand soldiers, seamen, and laborers. These are palpable facts, about which as facts, there can be no cavilling. e have the mer, and we could not have had them with

out the measure. And now let any Union man who complains of the measure test himself by writing down in one line that he s for subduing the rebellion by force of arms, and in the next that he is for taking these bundred and thirty thou sand men from the Union side and placing them where they would be but for the measure he condemns. If he cannot face his cause so stated, it is only because he can-

Among those who believe that our Government is largely indebted to its policy of military emancipation for its exemption from European intervention, we may cite the authority of Mr. Everett, who, at the meeting of the Massachusetts Electora College, took occasion to endorse the view of Mr. Stephens, the insurgent Vice President, on this subject. Mr. Everett said :

"There is now really but one question which divides these who hold, in good faith, that the military power of for his the rebellion must be subdued, and the Union preserved P.pe." at all bazards. I allude, of course, to the policy of emancipation. And will not our opposing friends who so warmly disapprove that policy, and who think it creates an insuperable obstacle to the restoration of the Union, reconsider that opinion, on perusal of the remarkable letter of the second officer of the Confederacy, written on the 5th of November, three days before the election—a private letter, but published by himself—by far the most import and utterance, on this subject, which has reached us from

'In this letter Mr. Stephens (the ablest civilian in the Confederacy) assigns the reasons why he desired the election of Gen: McClellan. In that event he assumed that an armis ild take place and a Convention of the States be held If that body failed to come to an amicable agreement to acknowledge the independence of the South, and Ge McClellan should repew the war, with the avowed object of restoring the Union with the old Constitution and all its guarantees, (which by his letter of acceptance he was ledged to do,) 'at that moment,' says Mr. Stephens, 'or as roon as possible, our recognition abroad would come. The silent sympathy of England, France, and other European Powers, at present with Lincoln, arises entirely from their manix on the subject of slavery. Here follows an omission in Mr. Stephens's letter, made as he himself intimates from public considerations. The passage omitted no doubt enforced the idea that if the North continued the war in order to restore the Constitution with guarantee of slavery, Europe would instantly recognise the Confederacy as an independent Power. Mr. Stephens then pro-

Lincoln had either to witness our recognition abread. the moral power of which alone he saw

down the war, or to make it an incipation war. He chose the latter alternative, and the more readily because it chimed in so accordantly a, is the plain English views of his party. This, in my option as McClellan should of this whole matter; and just an and the old Constitution with slavery would England rance, and the other European Powers throw all the oral power and influence of their recognition on our side, as not certain that they would not go further rather an see the old Union restored, if it should become necessary; but it would not become necessary;

"In these explicit terms the second officer of the rebel Government speaking no doubt on the strength of communications from agents abroad, and holding back what he deemed it not prudent to divulge, not only treats the emancipation policy of the President as a necessary military measure, but maintains that that alone had prevented the great gire, but maintains that that alone had prevented the great Powers of Europe from recognising the independence of the South, and, if necessary, throwing their swords into the scale to secure its establishment! May we not reasonably hope, in view of such opinions and disclosures from such a quarter, that this policy will cease to divide opinion at the North, and that we shall again, as in 1861, present an undivided front in defence of the integrity of the Union."

Of course, if there be any force in these view of Mr. Everett, as re-enforced by the authority of Mr. Stephens, the moral superiority of our position in the eyes of Europe will be greatly weakened by Much hesitation has preceded and still attends the the contemplated action of the insurgent leaders, in discussion of the topic, but when, as we are in- | virtually placing themselves on the same plane of military emancipation under pressure of military necessity. The difference on this subject between may be sure that the popular judgment will readily the two parties to the war will have been merged by the drift of events, making them equally tribu-At the North speculation is rife with regard to tary to the destruction of slavery from considera-

If it be asked whether we share the views of the There is one class of citizens in the Loyal States Enquirer on this topic, we have only to say that who must necessarily look with apprehension upon we believe the neutral position of foreign Governthe new policy contemplated by the Southern au- ments in our war was assumed in obedience to getherities. We allude to those who believe that our neral considerations of international obligation and Covernment has mainly assured its immunity from advantage, and has not been sensibly controlled in a foreign intervention in our civil war by the one way or another by the varying aspects of our steps which it has taken on the subject of slavery struggle in the matter of slavery. Hence, as we to identify itself with the cause of emancipation. do not suppose that the particular policy of mili-When the Southern States, under the pressure of tary emancipation adopted by the Administration a military necessity, shall have "laid a strong hand has procured for us any such immunity as Mr. on the colored element," there will be no difference Stephens or Mr. Everett imagines, we just as little in the policy of the two parties on this subject, share the opinion of the Richmond Enquirer when and there will be as little difference in the it intimates that foreign Governments will be inmotives which have led to its adoption as in fluenced in any degree to depart from the policy the results of the policy respectively adopted of non-intervention by the Confederate adoption

DEATH OF THE EARL OF CARLISLE.

The Right Honorable the Farl of Carlisle, known to Americans as Lord Morpeth, died in England on the 5th

George William Frederick Howard, K. G., Earl of Car lisle. Viscount Howard, of Morpeth, and Baron Dacre, o Gillesland, was born in England on the 18th of April, 1802. He was the eldest son of the sixth Earl. Lord Morpeth was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, and displayed remarkable ability and force of intellect at ar early age. Before he graduated he wrote two University prize poems, and obtained the highest classical honors

Lord Morpeth entered public life as member of Parlis nent for the West Riding of Yorkshire, and took his sea with the then Whig party, which numbered in its ranks Lord John Russell, Lord Melbourne, the Earl of Durham Daniel O'Connell, and the leading Irish Catholics. oung peer continued to act and vote with the men of this whom he was soon classed as a standard-bearer When Lord Melbourne formed a Cabinet, after the ac session of Queen Victoria, Lord Morpeth was appointed thief Secretary for Ireland, which office he held down to 1841. He was universally beloved by the people of that country, and his popularity with the masses was second only to that enjoyed by O'Conne'l himself.

When the Whigs returned to power in 1846, Lord Mor eth was appointed Commissioner of Woods and Forests and soon siter succeeded Lord Campbell as Chancellor of

the Duchy of Lancaster. About this period he set out for America, and completed n extensive tour in the United States, since which time his name has been well known to our citizens, and is asset cisted with many pleasing recollections When Lord Mor peth visited us our railroad system was in the infancy its presont maturity, so that the peer performed a large portion of his journey by stage. Kiding one day on a New England stage, his lordship had the box seat, and after a ittle time asked permission of the driver to take "the rib cons" and "toel" the concern for awhile. The driver re fused, observing that his horses were spirited and would not brock a stranger. The passenger assured him of his capability, and promised to "stand treat" at the next haiting place. Handing him the lines, the driver was surprisat the sty'e in which they were handled and the spien did pace at which his team were kept. Looking he partly apologized to his tellow-whip, saying, "I did not know you was a driver, where did you drive?" "Oh," replied the new hand, "I drove a stage in England." When

informed next day of the rank of the traveller the American whip acknowledged he had met his peer.

In the autumn of 1850 Lord Morpeth lectured twice before the Mechanics' Institute of Leeds, England, taking for his subjects "America," and the "Life and Writings of

subsequently Lord Morpeth visited the East, and pub lished the results of his tour under the title of "Diary of Travel in Turkish and Greek Waters." He also wrote ook en prophecy.

Lord Morpeth succeeded his father, as seventh Earl Carlisle, the 7th of October, 1848.

When Lord Palmerston formed his Cabinet in 1856 the Earl of Carlisle was appointed Lord Lieutenant of 1re and, which office he held until the dissolution of the Ministry. On the return of Lord Palmerston to power, in 1859, the Earl of Carlisle was reappointed to rule over Ireland, and discharged the duties of that high office until compelled to resign by the disease which has terminated his life. During his administration Lord Carlis e brought ail the powers of his great mind and vast experience bear in promoting his pian for the regeneration of the un-happy country committed to his charge—a plan which embraced the discountenancing of party violence and allay-ing religious prejudices, extending secular education, de-veloping the mineral resources of the kingdom, build ng veloping the mineral resources of the kingdom, build no railroads, and teaching the people an improved system o

His departure from Dublin was regretted by men of al classes, toeir grief being expressed in touching words on every occasion to his successor. Lord Wodehouse, who reached Dublin Castle in the latter end of November.

The pay of the members of the Virginia Legislature ha een raised to forty dollars per day, and a bill is also pend ing to increase the compensation of the Governor to thirty thousand dollars; judges and other officers of the State government to proporti

THE NEW PARLIAMENTARY REGULATION.

We are glad to observe that the committee of the House of Representatives to which was referred the proposition of Mr. Pendleton, introduced it into effect. The bill provides that the Secretary tary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of the Interior, the Attorney General, and the Postmaster General shall be entitled to occupy seats on the floor of the House of Representatives, with the right to participate in debate upon matters relating to the business of their respective departments, and to this end they are required to attend the sessions of the House at the opening of the sittings on Mondays and Thursdays of each week, to give information in reply to questions which may be propounded to them under the rules of the House.

These ru'es, as recommended by the committee,

That the Clerk of the House of Representatives shall keep a notice book in which he shall enter, at the request of any member, any resolution requiring information from any of the Executive Departments, or any question in-tended to be propounded to any of the Secretaries, or the Postmaster General or the Attorney General, relating to public affairs, or to the business pending before the House,

together with the name of the member and the day when the same shall be called up.

The member giving notice of such resolution or question shall, at the same time, give notice that the same shall be called up on Monday or Thursday of the succeeding week: provided that no such resolution or question shall be called up, except by unanimous consent, within less than three days after not ce shall have been given.

The Clerk shall, on the same day on which it is entered,

transmit to the chief officer of the proper department a copy of the resolution or question, together with the name of the member proposing the same, and of the day when it will come before the House for action.

On Monday and Thursday of each week, before any other business shall be taken up, except by unanimous consent, the resolutions and questions shall be taken up in the order in which they have been entered upon the notice book for that day.

The member offering a resolution may state succinetly

the object and scope of his resolution, and the reasons for desiring the information, and the Secretary of the proper department may reply, giving the information, or the reasons why the same should be withheld; and then, without further debate, the House shall vote on the resolution, un

less it shall be withdrawn or postponed.

In putting any question to the Secretaries, or the Attorney General or Postmaster General, no argument or opinion is to be offered, nor any fact stated, except so far as may be necessary to explain such question; and in an swering such question the Secretary, the Attorney Gene ral, or Postmaster General shall not debate the matter to which the same refers, nor state facts or opinions other than those necessary to explain the answe

As we took occasion to avow our approva of Mr. Pendleton's proposition immediately after its first suggestion by him, we have only to renew the expression of our hope that the bill as reported by the special committee may receive the sanction of the House and pass into the received regulations of that body. The most enlightened Governments of Europe and of the American continent have long since adopted this institute with admitted advantage in the elaboration and digest of legislative measures. The Governments of England, France, Holland, Sweden, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Prussia, Switzerland, Greece, Brazil, Chili, Colombia, the Republics of Central and South America, are among those in which provision is made for the participation of Ministers, with greater or less degrees of power, in the deliberations of the Legislature, and the regulation is found to subserve the unity and frankness of intercourse that should exist between different branches of the governing power in the State.

Among the reasons assigned by the committee in favor of the proposition we have room to cite only the following:

In fact, the influence of the Departments is in all cases, lmost without exception, exerted. It may well be doubt ed whether it was not originally intended by the framers of the Constitution that this should be so. The veto power lodged with the President, and the right accorded to and the duty imposed upon him to give to Congress infor-mation and to initiate legislation, show that they did not intend to establish an absolute separation of the legis a tive and executive departments. However that may have been, the fact is too obvious to members of Congress to need proof that the chief officers of the several Departments do exercise an important influence on the legislation of that body. The pages of the Globe within the last few years will satisfy those who have not had seats on the floo and been admitted to the sessions of the committees. It has been notorious for years that by personal interviews with members, by private conversations at the office, in social intercourse in casual meetings, on the floors of the two Houses, by verbal statements to the chairmen of committees-liable always to be misunderstood or even mis represented-by unofficial communications to the commitees themselves, these officers originate, press forward, medify or entirely defeat measures of legislation; and i has often happened that the rules of the House have been violated by stating what has occurred in committee in order to convey to members the opinion or wishes of a Sec-retary. These officers have no authorized communication with the committee of the House. Their suggestions, even if in writing, are not recorded. No trace of their exertions is left behind. They work, they accomplish, and yet after a few weeks, or even after a few days, it would be difficult to show-although members were fully conscious of it-that they bad produced any effect as to particular measures, or what were their opinions in relation to them Their secret, silent, omnipresent influence is felt, yet they are without responsibility. It is not necessarily corrupt because it is secret and silent, but it may be; and when ever opportunity for corruption exists, there will be then be, suspicion and distrust. Would it not be bet ter that their opinions should be expressed their facts stated, their policy enforced, their acts defended in open day on the floor of the House, in the face of the nation, in public speech, in official recorded statements, where there can be no hidden purpose, no misconception, no misrepre-sentation? This would enlighten the House, inform the country, and be just to officers. It would substitute a legitimate for an illegitimate power. It would establish an open, official, honorable mode of exercising that power instead of a secret, unrecognised mode, liable to abuse, and therefore always subject to the suspicion that it has been abused. It would establish authorized and accurate, in stead of unauthorized, and therefore uncertain and insecu rate, communication with the House. *

In the law organizing the Treasury Department, passed in 1789, it is made the duty of the Secretary of the Trea-sury to make report and give information to either branch of the Legislature, in person or in writing, (as he may be required,) respecting all matters referred to him by the Senate or House of Representatives, or which shail ap-pertain to his office. In the debate on that bill it was expressly objected that in time this second section would lead to the introduction of all the Secretaries on the floor : but it was, nevertheless, passed, and without so much as a denial that such would be the result.

Nor has history been without illustrations of the peces sity and of examples of this practice. In the early days of the Government the Secretaries were repeatedly called to the presence of either House for consultation, advice, and WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 1789.—The Secretary of Foreign

Affairs (Mr. Jefferson) attended, agreeably to orders, and made the necessary explanations.—(Anna's of Congress, vol., page 61, First Congress) SATURDAY, AUG. 22, 1789.—The Senate again entered on executive business. The President of the United States came into the Senate Chamber, attended by Gen. Knox, the Secre-

tary of War, and laid before the Senate the following statement of facts, with the questions thereto annexed, for their advice and consent.—(Annals of Congress, First Congress, vol. i. page 66.)

And again on the Monday following, the President and Gen. Knox were before the Senate. at the last session, "to provide that the heads of the Executive Departments may occupy seats on the floor of the House," has made a report in its favor, accompanied by a bill for the purpose of carrying it into effect. The bill provides that the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy the Secretary of Secretary of Secretary of the Navy the Secretary of Secretary

THE FEELING IN CANADA.

For many months past the apparent indifference of the Canadian authorities, the active intrigues of Southern refugees in that province, and the inimical course of certain newspapers there, united to establish a conviction among citizens of the United States that there existed in the British North American provinces a wide-spread feeling toward us, bordering on positive enmity. More recent occurrences, however, have brought into the foreground a large class of leading citizens and heavy capitalists, representing the substantial interests of Canada, who manifest a very different spirit, and who have already done much to re assure the public on either side of the border in regard to the centinuance of friendly relations. In the lake cities, since the action of the Canadian authorities following the discharge of the St. Albans raiders by Judge Coursol, all signs of disquietude have vanished. The Detroit Free Press declares that the restrictions upon intercourse with Canada imposed by the Secretary of State are unnecessary; that the preventive means adopted by the Canadian Government in stationing a vigilant police on the border and the calling into service of thirty companies of troops afford absolute protection; that Mr. Seward's order only embarrasses trade, and should be rescinded. Our Detroit

contemporary adds: "A few of our citizens, acting formally, felt it impor-tant to send a committee to different points in Canada, to ascertain what course the Canadian Government were likely to pursue, and therefore what steps were necessary on our part to protect us from these incursions from Canada. We have now before us such full and complete nformation upon that subject that we feel justified in saying that there is no longer any just or well-founded fear of raids. The Canadian Government has not only acted promptly but nobly. It has done all that any one could reasonably ask, and from the prompt and efficient manner in which it has acted, it is a source of regret that our Gov ernment or people had not put themselves in direct communication with it long since, and given it the information which it required.'

Entirely consistent with this view is the memorial of the citizens of Montreal, adopted December 20th, and which bears the signatures of the President of the Board of Trade, all the Bank Presidents, principal merchants, &c This document is as follows : To His Excellency the Right Honorable Charles Stanley.

Viscount Monck, Governor General of British North The memorial of the undersigned inhabitants of the city

of Montreal humbly sheweth—
That while Canada has hitherto preserved a strict neu-That while Canada has hitherto preserved a strict neutrality with respect to the unhappy strife now prevailing in the United States, your Excellency's memorialists feel that the circumstances which have recently taken place call for increased vigilance on the part of the Government and all subordinate authorities, to see that such neutrality is effectually and honestly maintained.

That your memorialists consider that, while political re-fugees residing in Canada are entitled to protection, it is the duty of such persons scrupulously to respect the neu-trality proclaimed by her Majesty, and to abstain from

making or furthering any acts of aggression upon the soi of a friendly Power. That your Excellency's memorialists also consider that any persons who commit acts of violence upon the borders of the neighboring States solely in consequence of the immunity which they expect to enjoy upon their escape here, acts which would never be attempted but for the facilities for flight which the proximity of our soil affords, abuse the right of asylum and violate the duty of neutrality enjoined upon all persons residing within the dominions of her Majesty.

That your memorialists deeply deplore the circumstan ces under which the persons lately in custody upon charges of robbery and murder at St. Albans were released, and also the manner in which the money entrusted to our authorities was restored to the prisoners, and feel that the result of the recent proceedings has been such as to cast doubts upon our good faith in carrying out our treaty obli-

That while it would be improper to prejudge the officers concerned in the release of the St. Albans prisoners and the restoration of the money, your Excellency's memo-rialists consider it due to the interest of justice and the good name of this province that the most searching inquiry into the conduct of the judge charged with the investigation under the treaty, and the officer entrusted with the money, be had without delay, and that speedy justice be done in Your Excellency's memorialists therefore most earnestly

pray that your Excellency will be pleased to order an immediate investigation into the conduct of all the officials connected with the discharge of the persons referred to, and the surrender of the money to them; and that your Excellency will be pleased to take such further measures required effectually to prevent any parties from violating the neutrality declared by her Majesty, and from endeavoring to interrupt the good feeling and friendly relationship which your memorialists trust may always continue to exist between Cauada and the United States.

The assurances thus given are very gratifying, and we have no doubt the authorities at Washington will do any thing consistent with the public interests by which needless restrictions may be relieved or wholly removed.

AN EXPLOSION AT THE SOUTH

NEWBERN, DEC. 24 -Judge Advocate Stackcort arrived o-day from Fortress Monroe for the purpose of investigating important frauds connected with the recruiting colored troops in this department.

A great shock, like that of an earthquake, was distinctly felt here this morning about two o'clock, rocking the earth and ratiling the windows in this place. It is supposed to be an explosion of great magnitude on the coast below Beaufort, as the sound came from that direction. Poss bly a magaz ne exploded in the forts at Wilmington or Charles ton, containing several hundred tons of powder. gale which has prevailed for the last few days subsided last ight, and the shipping which has been detained at Beau-

ort will be able to depart to-day.

[Forts Fisher and Caswell, below Wilmington, are distant nigety miles as the crow flies from Newbern. The explosion was that of a powder ship, near Fort Fisher, prior to Admiral Porter's assault upon that fortification.

CAPTURE OF BLOCKADE RUNNERS. The Navy Department has received information of the results of the cruise of the United States steamer Cho-

cura, Capt. Meade, off Velasco, Texas, by which it appears that on November 24th she chased ashore a schooner. which was totally wrecked by a heavy gale. On December 4th she captured the three-masted schooner L. O. Wood, with two hundred and twenty-one bales of long

EXILED TO THE SOUTH

The Alexandria Journal of the 27th instant says: "Mr Wheat, a former merchant here, and the Rev. I Packard, former Rector of Christ Church Parish, are, by order of the War Department, to be sent through the lines to-morrow. We mentioned some time since the fact of these gentlemen having left the city and visited Washington without the aid of a pass, in defiance of the military Marshal General Defences South of the Potomac, with the recommendation that they be sent through the lines, they having refused to subscribe to the oath. To-day Col. Wells received an order from the War Department approving his recommendation, and ordering that they be sent through the lines via Fairfax Court-House. They leave on the ten o'clock train to-morrow morning. They are both, we understand, very much opposed to taking a "foreign tour," and deem themselves very much perse-cuted in not being permitted to set at defiance our Goverument and its law, and at the same time remain under

THE MOVEMENT ON WILMINGTON.

ASSAULT ON FORT FISHER.

The Richmond papers of Tuesday, the 27th in stant, have brought within the Union lines the first intelligence of the commencement of active operations by Admiral Porter's expedition against the fortifications of Wilmington. The following copies of the rebel despatches have been forwarded by Gen. Grant :

WILMINGTON, DECEMBER 25, 1864. The enemy's fleet, over fifty vessels, including two moni tors, several armed vessels and many heavily armed frigates and sloops-of-war, made a furious attack on Fort Fisher about one o'clock yesterday, and kept up an average fire of thirty shots per minute until night. Our loss is twentythree wounded. The attack was renewed at ten o'clock this morning and has been very furious and continuous. No report of casualties to day. Col. Lamb, who is in command of the fort, replied to the enemy's fire slowly and deliberately. The enemy, under cover of the heavy fire, landed about three brigades two and a balf miles above Fort Fisher. They were immediately engaged by a smaller force. The enemy held his ground at night.

WILMINGTON, DECEMBER 26, 1864. The enemy's infaniry attacked Fort Fisher late last

night. They were repulsed with considerable loss. There was heavy rain and wind through the night. Prisoners report the Twenty-fourth Corps of the Yankee army present, under Butler.

Gen Grant has also forwarded the following editorial comments on the above news from one of the Richmond journals:

"It will be seen that the Yankee fleet attacked Fort Fisher about one o'clock P. M. on Saturday, and bombarded it heavily till nightfall, renewing the bombardment at ten o'clock on Sunday morning and continuing it throughout the day, and that under cover of the fire of the fleet the enemy landed an infantry force above Fort Fisher, which attacked the fort on Sunday night and were repulsed.

"Fort Fisher is situated on a sand spit on the right bank of the Cape Fear river, at its mouth, twenty miles below Wilmington. The enemy, we presume, reached their position above the fort not by passing up the river, where they would have been obliged to run the gauntlet of the guns both of Fisher and Caswell on the left bank, but by anding on the beach east of the mouth of Cape Fear river. The enemy having effected a lodgment above the fort is a serious matter. It will cost double the force to dislodge him that would have prevented his landing."

THE PLAN OF ATTACK—UNOFFICIAL DETAILS.

A correspondent of the Baltimore American who acompanied the fleet of Admiral Porter, writing from the steamer Santiago de Cuba, off Beaufort, in advance of the direct movement upon Wilmington, gives some interesting particulars as to the composition of the naval and land forces, and of the plan of attack, which have not before btained publicity.

It is already known that the entire expedition is under he command of Rear Admiral David D. Porter, whose fleet consists of nearly one hundred and fifty vessels of all descriptions, including army transports, tenders, &c. The naval fleet comprises about sixty-five vessels and an aggregate of 591 guns. The co operating land force, numbering about ten thousand men, is under command of Gen. Butler. The letter proceeds as follows:

THE POINT OF ATTACK.

It is proposed to commence operations upon the fortifications at New Inlet, the eastern entrance of Cape Fear river. The main point of attack is Federal Point, the narrow strip of land which bounds the north side of New Inlet and forms a part of the east bank of Cape Fear river. Federal Point is held by a series of works, the possession of which will at once give us command of Cape Fear river and virtually close up the port of Wilmington, and by cutting off Fort Caswell, which stands near the mouth of the render its possession by the rebels no longer of any avail. Hence the importance of selecting New Inlet as

the point of attack.

The principal works commanding New Inlet are along he shore of Federal Point, the strongest being Fort Fisher, a casemated earthwork of great power, mounting t is supposed, thirty six heavy guns, some of them rifles having a range of over three miles. This work stands about two hundred yards from the shore. Following the line of the shore for about three-quarters of a mile, in a southwest direction from Fort Fisher, runs a line of batteries, five in number, connected by rifle-pits. Three of these batteries are casemated and two open. The num-ber of guns mounted in them is not known, but some of them are rifles of long range. Some three hundred varies northwest of the terminus at this line of batteries stands what is designated as Battery Lamb, or Mound Battery so called from its formation, it being an artificial mound of earth some forty feet high, mounting two large guns, which are prominent objects to the eye. A lighthouse is also stationed on this mound, which is, doubtless, of great as sistance to the bl ckade-runners in making the Inlet at night. The mound was thrown up, it is supposed, for the purpose of obtaining an elevation from which to throw unging shot at any of our light draught monitors should hey attempt to come up the channel. The guns of this pattery command the main channel, whilst most of the guns of Fort Fisher and of the intervening batteries com-mand not only the main channel but also the Swash chan nel, which runs close along the beach in a northeast direcion. The latter work stands about at the entrance of the

Synah channel. About two miles southeast from Fort Fisher, on Zeeke'. Island, which forms the southern shore of Now Inlet, is another battery of some strength, but Fort Fisher and th sijacent works are evidently the key to the position; and Federal Point once in our hands, farewell to blockade running, at least so far as Wilmington is concerned.

Notwithstanding the evident strength of their works, i s confidently believed that they cannot long withstand the terrible fire that can be brought to bear upon them. The combined armament of the fleet numbers hundred and ninety-one guns, most of them of the largest salibre, and carrying a weight of metal safe to say unpre redented in the annals of naval warfare. At least two hundred guns can be brought to bear at one time upon the works.

About three or four miles up the beach from Fort Fish r is a small water battery called "Half Moon Battery, numbering some two or three guns, but doubtless it can offer very little resistance.

It is not known definitely where the troops will landprobably near this point, or at Myrtle Inlet, or Masonboro' Inlet, the latter fourteen miles from New Inlet, and the former about seven.

THE IRON-CLAD PLEET.

The iron-clad fleet, led by the frigate Ironsides, and ac companied by the gunboats acting as their tenders, will approach Fort Fisher from the northeast, standing close in shore in the Swash changel until they come within three quarters of a mile of the fort, or as near that point as the depth of the water will permit-the Ironsides standing staple cotton. On December 5th she captured the British broadside toward the fort, and the Monitors ranged in schooner Lot Harley, of Montreal, with an assorted cargo. line, bows on, at convenient distances behind the frigate. In this position they will fire over the land at the rebel

THE WOODEN SHIPS.

The frigates, sloops-of-war, and other larger vessels will move in shore, forming a crescent shaped line of battle about one mile from the forts, or as near to the enemy's works as possible, and pour their concentrated batteries into the forts a la Farragut. Our wooden hulls have been actively preparing for this

authority, and returning thereto. Their cases were referred to the War Department by Col. Wells, Provost and other expedients to promote the efficiency of the vessels and protect them and their crews, as far ble, from the enemy's guns, have been adopted, and it is hoped we shall soon have another great naval victory to chronicle.

The troops composing the land force are under com-

mand of Major Gen. Builer, composed of the first division of the Twenty-fifth and second division of the Twentyfourth Corps, and second division of the Twentyfourth Corps, and are embarked on board the followingnamed transports: De Worley, Charles Thomas, Weybosset, Pent, Idaho, L. Moore, Baltie, Haze, Empire City,
Admiral Dupont, Montauk, H. Livingston, John Rice,

Starlight, Ella Knight, Beaufort, Eastern States, Albany Juited States, and other vessels, names not ascertained.

The following are regiments composing the force, as far

Second division Twenty-fourth Corps, Gen. Ames—third brigade—169th New York regiment, Col. Alden; 115th New York, Major Waluth; 4th New Hampshire, Capt. Roberts; 13th Indiana, Capt. Zent.

First brigade, Col. Curtis—142d, 117th, 142d, and 3d

Second brigade, Col. Pennypacker-17th and 48th New

Second brigade, Col. Pennypacker—17th and 45th New York, and 75th and 97th Pennsylvania.

First division Twenty-fifth Corps, Gen. C. J. Payne—first brigade, Col. E. Wright—15t United States colored regiment, 37th United States colored regiment, 5th United States colored regiment. Second brigade, Col. J. W. Ames-4th, 6th, 30th, and

OFFICIAL NEWS FROM WILMINGTON.

The following despatch was received at the Navy Department yesterday from a bearer of despatches from Rear Admiral Porter, who left the fleet during its assault upon Fort Fisher on Sunday after-

FORTRESS MONROE, DEC. 27-920 P. M. Hon. GIDEON WELLES, Secretary of the Navy:

The powder ship was exploded within three hundred yards of Fort Fisher at about 2 A. M. on the 24th instant. Later in the day Admiral Porter attacked the fort and adjacent defences, and renewed the bombardment on Christmas day. On each occasion we drove the rebels from their guns to the shelter of their bomb-proofs, so as

o effectually silence their fire. In a very few minutes after the frigates and heavy loops got into position, a detachment of troops landed on Sunday afternoon. Skirmishers then pushed up gallantly to the fort under cover of our fire. Some of the more daring actually entered the works and brought off the rebel flag. Troops have re-embarked. Bombardment by the fleet continues.

The Santiago de Cuba brings North rebel company A of the 42d North Carolina, captured in a rebel earthwork to the northward of Fort Fisher by boats from the fleet.

S. W. PRESTON, Lieutenant United States Navy.

A FAILURE OF THE LAND FORCES.

From the Republican of last evening. Official information to the Government confirms, in a degree, the rebel reports in Richmond papers, sent to the country by the Secretary of War, that our land and naval attack upon Fort Fisher at the entrance to the harbor of Wilmington (N. C.) was a failure, if not a repulse. It was a "serious matter" to the rebels that Gen. Butler anded his forces on the north side of Fort Fisher, but we ear that Gen. Butler discovered that it was a "serious matter" to him, after he landed, that he did not have more troops. The official telegram to the Government, from the bearer of despatches who arrived at Fortress Monroe last night, announces the fact that Gen. Butler's forces attacked and entered the fort, and captured some of the garrison and the rebel flag that was flying from the battlements, but that they subsequently retired and re-embarked. If the announcement by an evening contemporary is true, that "official information has been received at the War Department that our naval and military forces operating against Wilmington, North Carolina, have been withdrawn and are now at Fortress Monroe," the "failure" has been more serious than we anticipated. But in the midst of numerous glorious victories we must expect, now and then

ANTICIPATED VICTORIES.

a triff ng repulse.

Special Despatch to the New York Commercial Advertiser. WASHINGTON, DEC. 27-3 P. M. cially received. Truly it is beginning to "thunder all around," and before many days Admiral Porter and Gen homas will probably present valuable New Year's gifts to the nation-the former Forts Fisher and Caswell and the latter a spiendid victory over the army of Hood—while Gen. Sherman will doubtless add Augusta as his New Year's

The War and Navy Departments have both received ad vices from the army and fleet operating against the defences of Wilmington. The intelligence is highly favorable, and

gives the assurance of almost immediate success The Secretary of the Navy declares that Admiral Porter's part of the expedition will accomplish all that was expected of it. Its object is now declared to be the capture of Forts Caswell and Fisher, thus hermetically closing that entrepot of the Southern States. Then Gen. Butler

will be prepared to operate directly against Wilmington.

The intelligence from Gen. Sherman is also of the highest importance. In his despatch announcing the fall of Savannah he stated to the Secretary of War that he intended to move up the Savannah river immediately and capture Augusta, the most valuable objective point in the South he news to-day is that he has already moved up the river. Sherman also says that, when this success was obtained, he would swing around upon the rear of Charleston and cap ture that city, destroying all its railroad communicati

n his way. The news from Gen. Thomas is glorious. He has brought Hood to a stand on the north bank of the Tennessee. The river has been rendered impassable by heavy floods, and Hood is without artillery or pontoon bridges. Gen. Thomas proposes to move upon the hastily constructed works, and force Hood to fight or surrender. Thus will the rebel army be virtually sunibilated

This is really glorious news with which to close the vest 864, and will cause great rejoicing throughout the country

TERRIBLE RAILROAD CASUALTY.

From the Cleveland Leader of December 24th. It is our painful duty to record another terrible railroad ca'amity, by which five persons lost their lives, and a large number have been seriously if not fatally injured. The accident happened to the mail train on the Cleveland and Pittsburg road, which left this city at eight o'clock yesterday morning. The train had arrived at a small trestlework bridge, about a mile north of Hudson, when the locometive struck a rail which, it is supposed, had been broken or displaced by the frost The locomotive, beggage car, and the first passenger coach passed safely over, but the second coach struck the bridge, entirely demolishing it, and precipitating the second and third coaches into the ravine—the second breaking in two and falling on the west side of the bridge, where it was entirely destroyed by fire; and the third falling on the east side, where it now lies, pretty badly smashed up. After passing the bridge the first passenger coach caught fire from the upsetting of the stoves, and was completely consumed. As soon as they could extricate themselves from the wreck those of the passengers who were uninjured immediately set to work emoving the dead and those who were wounded and unable to free themselves from the mass of seats, cushions, broken windows, burning coals, &c., under which they were buried. Among the first taken out was Oliver H Perry, of this city, who had with him his gun and a valuable dog, being on a hunting excursion, a pastime which he dearly loved. The most melancholy and heart-rending bereavement is that of the little daughter of J. H. Robin-

son. Her father, mother, and self were on their way from their home in Michigan to make a holyday visit to riends in Pennsylvania, when death, unberalded and unthought of, thus rudely tore them from her, and she is left alone in this wide world an orphan. Her lamentations were pitcous in the extreme. Some of the wounded were taken to houses in the vicinity of the accident; but the dead and the greater portion of the injured were removed to Hudson as speedily as possible, where the killed were washed and laid out, side by side, in an unoccupied hotel. and the wounded received every attention, medical and